

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (previously amended) A backup and retrieval system for a network computing system, the network computing system comprising a plurality of groups of network devices storing data, the backup and retrieval system comprising:

at least two backup cells each comprising:

a backup device executing a backup of the data stored on at least one of the plurality of groups of network devices;

a management component, communicatively coupled to the at least one backup device, controlling the backup of the data to the backup device; and

each of the plurality of backup cells communicatively coupled to at least one other of the plurality of backup cells, and each of the plurality of backup cells adaptable to be controlled by a management component in another of the plurality of backup cells.

2. (original) The backup and retrieval system of claim 1, wherein the backup device is controllable from the management component in another of the plurality of backup cells.

3. (original) The backup and retrieval system of claim 1, wherein the backup device is controllable from the management component in another of the plurality of backup cells via the management component in the same backup cell as the backup device.

4. (previously amended) A backup and retrieval system for a network computing system, the network computing system comprising a first group of network devices storing data, the backup and retrieval system comprising:

a first backup cell comprising:

at least one backup device executing a backup of the data stored on the first group of network devices;

a first manager component, communicatively coupled to the at least one backup device, controlling the backup of the data to the at least one backup device;

a second backup cell communicatively coupled to the first backup cell, the second backup cell comprising:

a second manager component; and

the second manager component directly controlling the backup of the data to the at least one backup device.

5. (original) The backup and retrieval system of claim 4 wherein the second manager component directly controls the backup of data to the at least one backup device.

6. (canceled)

7. (currently amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 4, the network computing system comprising a first network device, wherein the first manager component is a software module executing on the first network device, and the second manager component is a software module executing on the second network device.

8. (original) The backup and retrieval system of claim 7, the network computing system further comprising a second network device, wherein the second manager component executes on the second network device.

9. (original) The backup and retrieval system of claim 7 wherein the second manager component executes on the first network device.

10. (previously amended) A backup and retrieval system for a network computing system, the network computing system comprising a first group of network devices containing data, the network computing system further comprising a first network device, the backup and retrieval system comprising:

at least one backup device executing backup functions for the data contained on the first group of network devices;

a first manager component executing on the first network device, communicatively coupled to the at least one backup device, controlling the backup of the data to the at least one backup device; and

a second manager component, communicatively coupled to the first network device, the second manager component directly controlling the backup of the data to the at least one backup device.

11. (original) The backup and retrieval system of claim 10 wherein the second management component executes on the first network device.

12. (original) The backup and retrieval system of claim 10, the network computing system further comprising a second network device, wherein the second management component executes on the first network device.

13. (original) The backup and retrieval system of claim 10, the network computing system further comprising a second group of network devices containing data, wherein the second management component controls a backup of the data contained on the second group of network devices.

14. (canceled)

15. (original) The backup and retrieval system of claim 10, wherein the backup device is controllable from the second management component via the first management component.

16. (previously amended) A backup and retrieval system for a network computing system, the network computing system comprising a first group of network devices containing data, the backup and retrieval system comprising:

at least one backup device executing backup functions for the data contained on the first group of network devices;

a first network device, communicatively coupled to the at least one backup device, controlling the backup of the data contained on the first group of network devices to the at least one backup device; and

a second network device, communicatively coupled to the first network device, the second network device directly controlling the backup of the data to the at least one backup device.

17. (original) The backup and retrieval system of claim 16, the network computing system further comprising a second group of network devices containing data, wherein the second network device controls a backup of the data contained on the second group of network devices.

18. (canceled)

19. (original) The backup and retrieval system of claim 16, wherein the second network device controls the backup of the data to the at least one backup device via the first network device.

20. (previously amended) A backup and retrieval system for a network computing system, the network computing system comprising a plurality of network devices storing data, the backup and retrieval system comprising:

a plurality of backup cells comprising:

a backup device executing a backup of the data stored on at least one of the plurality of network devices;

a management component, residing on and configured to execute on any network device and communicatively coupled to at least one backup device, for controlling the backup of the data to the backup device; and

means for communicatively coupling to at least one other backup cell, whereby the first backup cell is capable of being controlled by a management component in the other backup cell.

21. (previously amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 20, comprising means for controlling the backup device in a first backup cell from the management component in another of the plurality of backup cells.

22. (previously amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 20, comprising means for controlling the backup device in a first backup cell from the management component in another of the plurality of backup cells via the management component in the first backup cell.

23. (previously amended) A backup and retrieval system for a network computing system, the network computing system comprising a plurality of network devices storing data, the backup and retrieval system comprising one or more backup cells comprising:

a backup device executing a backup of the data stored on at least one of the plurality of network devices;

a media component, configured to reside on and execute on any network device including a first network device, communicatively coupled to at least one backup device for controlling the backup of the data to the backup device;

a client component, configured to reside on and execute on any network device including a second network device and communicatively coupled to at least one media component, directing the media component to backup the data according to operational parameters established by the client component; and

a management component, configured to reside on and execute on any network device including a third network device and communicatively coupled to at least one client component, directing the client component to backup the data according to backup parameters of the backup cell established by the management component.

24. (previously amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 20, comprising means for communicatively coupling each of the plurality of backup cells to at least one other of the plurality of backup cells, and each of the plurality of backup cells adaptable to be controlled by a management component in another of the plurality of backup cells.

25. (previously amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 20, comprising means for the management component in another of the plurality of backup cells to control the client component.

26. (previously amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 20, comprising means for the management component in another of the plurality of backup cells to control the client component via the management component in the same backup cell as the client component.

27. (previously amended) A backup and retrieval system for a network computing system, the network computing system comprising a plurality of network devices storing data, the backup and retrieval system comprising:

a plurality of backup cells comprising:

a backup device executing a backup of the data stored on at least one of the plurality of network devices; and

a management component, residing on and configured to run on any network device and communicatively coupled to at least one backup device, for controlling the backup of the data to the backup device.

28. (previously amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 27, comprising means for communicatively coupling to at least one other backup cell, whereby the first backup cell is capable of being controlled by a management component in the other backup cell.

29. (previously amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 27, comprising means for controlling the backup device in a first backup cell from the management component in another of the plurality of backup cells.

30. (previously amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 27, comprising means for controlling the backup device in a first backup cell from the management component in another of the plurality of backup cells via the management component in the first backup cell.